APPENDIX H

Flood Risk Management Coordination with USFWS

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, California 95825-1846

In Reply Refer To:
08ESMF00-2013-CPA-0002

DEC 26 2012

Lt. Col. John K. Baker P.E.,
Commander,
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District
1455 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94103-1398

Dear Colonel Baker:

This letter is in response to a request received via email from Bill DeJager of your office on December 11, 2012, for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to document our position regarding the selection of levee alignment alternatives to be studied by the San Francisco Bay Shoreline Study.

On June 5, 2012, the Service participated in a meeting attended by the Corps of Engineers (Corps) and California Coastal Conservancy, in which several levee alignment alternatives were discussed. During the course of the meeting, two alternatives were proposed to be dropped from further consideration by the Corps as they were not supported by the local sponsors. These two alternatives were the Alviso Railroad Spur and WPCP South, which borders Pond A18 and the San Jose Waste Water Treatment Plant (see Attachment 1). The Service did not support removing these two alternatives from further consideration as proposed by the Corps and local sponsors. We continue to recommend that the Alviso Railroad Spur and WPCP South levee alignments remain part of the ongoing NEPA/CEQA process. It is our position that the implementation of these two alternatives would have less impact on fish and wildlife resources, including endangered species, and would allow for a more sustainable restoration project.

The Service recommended retaining the Alviso Railroad Spur alignment in the EIS/EIR in order to minimize effects to New Chicago Marsh and to evaluate a full range of alternatives pursuant to NEPA. Based on the Service's current understanding of the New Chicago Marsh, implementation of the Alviso Railroad Spur alignment would potentially minimize impacts to fish and wildlife resources, including federally listed species protected under the Endangered Species Act. In contrast the construction of the Alviso North levee alignment would continue to isolate the remaining portion of New Chicago Marsh from the San Francisco Bay, limit the ability to restore the area to a fully functioning tidal marsh, and result in a largely fresh water or brackish marsh.

Based on our review of materials presently available, the Service is concerned that the WPCP North levee alignment would have potentially unacceptable effects to listed species. The WPCP

South alignment would have less impact on existing habitat functions and would potentially result in a more comprehensive restoration of Pond A18. The WPCP South alignment may also better support the long-term management of the pond as fish and wildlife habitat by reducing management costs and minimizing human disturbance as a result of creating a larger intact habitat area. Furthermore, the WPCP South alignment has been identified in the Service's draft Tidal Marsh Recovery Plan as providing habitat functions (i.e., high marsh refugia) which would help contribute to the recovery of salt marsh harvest mouse, California clapper rail, and snowy plover.

If you have any further questions please contact Mark Littlefield, Chief, Watershed Planning Branch, at (916) 414-6520.

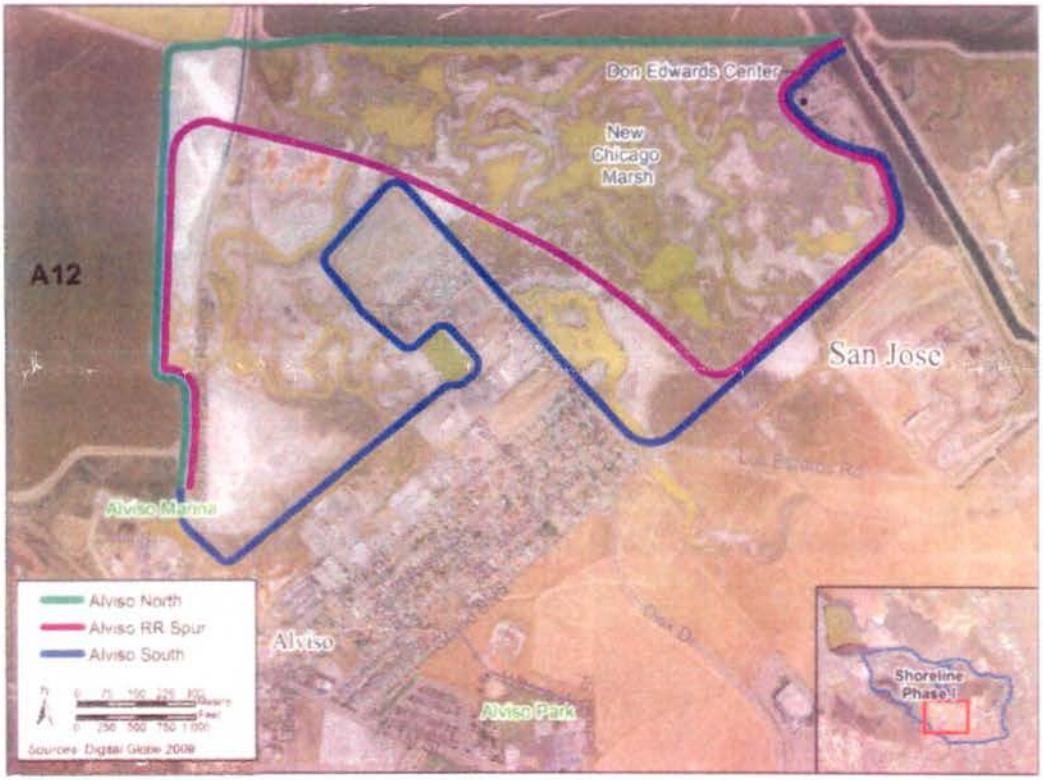
Sincerely

Daniel Welsh
Assistant Field Supervisor

cc:
Joseph Terry, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, Sacramento, California
Eric Mruz, Refuge Manager, Don Edwards NWR, Fremont, California
William DeJager, San Francisco Corps of Engineers, San Francisco, California
Judy Sheen, San Francisco Corps of Engineers, San Francisco, California
Brenda Buxton, California Coastal Conservancy, Oakland, California

ATTACHMENT 1

Map 1. Alviso Levee Alignments



Map 2. WPCP Levee Alignments